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ABSTRACT

This book challenges the widely held view that relations between dominant and subordinate groups can be unmarked by histories of oppression, as many cultural diversity theorists, educators, and legal practitioners presume. In this view, problems of communication are mere technical glitches caused by cultural and other differences, and educators and legal practitioners need only learn various "cross-cultural" strategies to manage these differences. What makes the cultural differences approach so inadequate in the classroom is not that it is wrong, because people in reality do have culturally specific practices that must be taken into account, but that its emphasis on cultural diversity too often descends to a superficial reading of differences that makes power relations invisible and keeps dominant cultural norms in place. This book examines how relations of domination and subordination stubbornly regulate encounters in the classroom and courtroom and shape what can be known, thought, and said. Essays focus on intertwining systems of domination--capitalism, patriarchy, and White supremacy--as they affect the experiences of Canadian Aboriginal women, other Canadian minority groups, and women with developmental disabilities in college classrooms and in court cases involving sexual assault and immigration issues. (Contains references, a bibliography, and an index). (SV)

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